

NATURE



DO YOUR OWN THING

Come to California to experience a matchless array of natural wonders. Walk in awe beneath vast stands of 2,500-year-old redwoods. Descend almost 8,000 feet into King's Canyon. Hike in the shadows of Mt. Whitney, the tallest peak in the lower 48 states. Along the Pacific, stroll beside the crashing surf, or cruise out to untrammelled islands. Cross seemingly bare deserts to see uniquely adapted wildlife and startlingly colorful flowers. Here are just a few of the marvels of nature to enjoy in California, with some intriguing recommendations from the locals.



NATURE GETAWAYS

- 1 MOUNTAIN
- 2 ISLANDS
- 3 DESERT
- 4 COASTAL
- 5 WILDLIFE
- 6 EVENTS & FESTIVALS

GUIDE TO SYMBOLS



Wildlife Viewing



Scenic Coast



Whale Watching



Tide Pools



Hiking



Camping



Historical Sites



Famous Landmarks

VACATION PLANNING: Call 1-800-GO-CALIF for the California Visitor's Guide, or call your travel agent. Visit us on the internet at <http://gocalif.ca.gov>
 DISABLED PERSONS ACCESS: For information, see page 6 of the California Visitor's Guide.

1 MOUNTAIN GETAWAYS



SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

Sequoia National Park and its environs, about 225 miles northeast of Los Angeles, possess trees, peaks and canyons without peer. Just off Highway 198, you'll find the Giant Forest, home of the largest trees on Earth — including the 2,500-year-old General Sherman Tree. Mt. Whitney, the highest peak in the continental US, looms over the park at 14,495 feet. Trailheads

LOCALS RECOMMEND

AMAZING NATURAL WONDERS

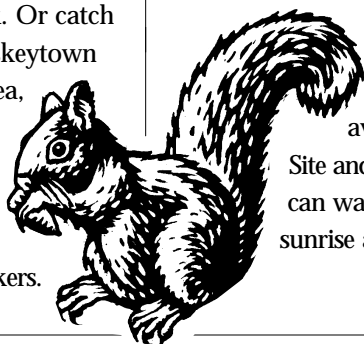
- ☛ King's Canyon, near Sequoia: *deepest canyon, stalagmite formations.*
- ☛ Old Faithful Geyser, Calistoga: *still spouting 60' into the air.*
- ☛ Avenue of Giants: *2,500-year-old redwoods, near 101.*
- ☛ Lava Beds, Lassen National Park: *eerie plateaus riddled with volcanic craters.*

are found at Whitney Portal, near Lone Pine. Adjacent King's Canyon boasts North America's deepest canyon and a vast wilderness. Trails for advanced hikers begin beyond Zumwalt Meadow. Nearby Boyden Caverns offers fine stalagmites and stalactites.

You can camp in the wilderness with campsites reserved on a first-come basis. Rustic or deluxe cabins can also be reserved by contacting the park's ranger station at 209/565-3134.

SHASTA CASCADE

About 275 miles northeast of San Francisco via Interstate 5, the city of Redding is the gateway to a region of pristine peaks, lakes, rivers and lava beds. Scenic Shasta Lake, north of Redding, is ideal for houseboating. Mt. Shasta's volcanic slopes offer a challenging climb with dramatic views. For fly-fishing, try nearby Hat Creek. Or catch your limit and picnic at Whiskeytown Shasta Trinity Recreation Area, west of Redding. At Lassen Volcanic National Park, 40 miles east of Redding, boiling lakes and bubbling geothermal mud pots await hikers.



2 ISLAND GETAWAYS



CHANNEL ISLANDS

Eight undisturbed islands lie just 20 miles off the coast between Ventura and Santa Barbara. Five of these islands — home to abundant wildlife like brown-nose pelicans, sea lions and dolphins — comprise the Channel Islands National Park.

Anacapa, the closest island, offers tide pools, kayaking, snorkeling and diving. There's a richly populated kelp forest at Frenchy Cove. Santa Cruz, the largest, most diverse island, features sea caves, colonies of nesting sea birds,

wild horses and sheep. January through March you can see migrating whales up close from all the islands. Camping is rugged and requires a permit (call 805/658-5730). Boats depart Ventura Harbor or Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard.

ANGEL ISLAND

A ferry ride from San Francisco's Pier 43 takes you to Angel Island by way of Tiburon. Your reward at the island's peak is a 360-degree view of the bay with postcard images of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Marin Headlands. You'll dock at Ayala Cove, where bicycle rentals, hiking trails, and kayaking excursions begin. For a secluded picnic with a cityscape view, hike

to sheltered Perles Beach. Nine environmental campsites are available, including Sunset Site and Ridge Site where you can wake to the shimmering sunrise across the water.

LOCALS RECOMMEND

WHAT A DIVE

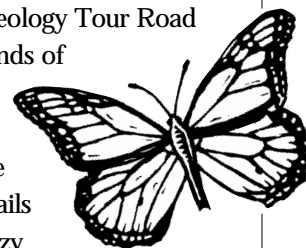
- ☛ Scripps Institute, La Jolla: *world-renown underwater preserve.*
- ☛ Catalina Island: *Snorkel, dive, glass bottom boat tours of underwater park.*
- ☛ Channel Islands: *kelp forest at Anacapa Island.*
- ☛ Painted Cave, Channel Islands: *largest sea cave, Santa Cruz Island.*
- ☛ Point Lobos, Monterey: *preserves at Whalers and Bluefish Coves.*

3 DESERT GETAWAYS



JOSHUA TREE

Joshua Tree National Park, 45 miles north of Palm Springs, is home to tall, spiked yucca trees named after the prophet. Here, two distinct deserts — the high Mojave and the low Colorado — converge with fascinating results. Enter at the Oasis Visitor Center in Twentynine Palms. Drive the Geology Tour Road to view the thousands of rounded boulder stacks punctuating the 850-square-mile park. The park's trails are awash with fuzzy cacti, odd ocotillo patches and wildlife. To study the prickly plants, visit the Cholla Cactus Garden. On the Hidden



LOCALS RECOMMEND

BIRDS TO WATCH



- ☛ Mono Lake, SE. of Yosemite: *birthplace of 90% of the world's seagulls.*
- ☛ Point Reyes, N. of San Francisco: *meadows to sea, a birdwatcher's dream.*
- ☛ Salton Sea, near Anza-Borrego: *shallow water, rare-winged birds.*
- ☛ Klamath River, Shasta Cascade: *winter celebration of eagles.*

Valley Nature Trail, you'll see some old cattle rustlers' hideouts. Campgrounds here offer meager amenities so stock up in Twentynine Palms.

ANZA-BORREGO

Anza-Borrego State Park, with 600,000 acres to explore, lies two hours east of San Diego. Marvelously diverse, the park

is rich with rippled sand dunes, twisting canyons and rivers of wildflowers in March and April. Desolate solitude awaits hikers, while meteor-showered nights treat campers. Choose from 500 miles of trails that are off-limits to vehicles. For petroglyphs, head for Blaire Valley. For waterfalls, explore Borrego Palm Canyon. Camping ranges from five-star hook ups to isolated sites (call 619/767-5311). The Borrego Springs resort area offers hotels and motels within the park.

4 COASTAL GETAWAYS



BIG SUR & POINT LOBOS

Just south of Monterey and Carmel on Highway 1, spectacular scenery awaits you at Big Sur. On the way, turnouts offer inspiring views and winter whale watching. You'll find accessible beaches at Garrapata State Park. The 1889 light-house at Point Sur State Park, perched 272 feet above the sea, offers a sweeping view of the coastal drama.

For solitude, hike the trails inside Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park toward the Ventana Wilderness. Or for hearty hiking, pack-in at Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park. At nearby Point Lobos, you can explore dozens of spectacular tide pools, take a dip with sea otters and sea lions at Whalers Cove or follow easy paths on the Bird Island Trail to sandy inlets for bird and whale watching.

THE NORTH COAST

The North Coast — a region of seaside hamlets, plunging shorelines, sheltered

beaches and redwood forests — extends north of San Francisco from Bodega Bay to the Redwood Forest near Crescent City. The natural beauty of the coast invites contemplation. At Bodega Bay, a horseback ride over rolling hills provides inspiring views. The beach at Gualala is a favorite of basking sea lions. Continue north to explore the long beaches and creeks at Man-

LOCALS RECOMMEND

TIDE POOL PLEASURES



☞ Point Lobos, Monterey Peninsula: *countless pools, fantastic rock formations.*

☞ Little Corona Del Mar, Orange County: *sea ponds of sea anemone, sea urchins, and hermit crabs.*

☞ Channel Islands, off Ventura: *Anacapa Island's Frenchy Cove at low tide.*

☞ La Jolla Coves: *rocky pools protect rich variety.*

☞ Sunset Cliffs, Point Loma: *chock-full of starfish, and colorful sea anemone.*

chester State Park. For scenic state parks and campsites try the Mendocino coast and majestic Redwood National Park.

5 WILDLIFE GETAWAYS



CENTRAL VALLEY

In the midst of the Pacific flyway, the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys shelter millions of migratory birds nesting in national wildlife refuges. Bring boots and

binoculars to explore wetland marshes, tule grass and ponds.

Marshes — habitats for geese, ducks, yellow-headed black birds, shore birds, turtles and frogs — are found at the Sacramento

National Wildlife Refuge in Willow and the Gray Lodge in Gridley, north of Sacramento.

Two hours south of Sacramento, the Merced County wetlands attract over 200 species

of birds and 47 endangered plant and animal species. Bald eagles, long-billed dowitchers, tule elk, white-faced ibis and the Aleutian Canada goose cohabitate along the 30-mile loop.

SHASTA CASCADE

In northeastern California, off Interstate 5 and surrounding the city of Redding, Shasta Cascade's ragged craters, placid lakes, crystal skies and lush meadows support an abundance of wildlife. Here, spring meadows stage spectacular wildflower shows. In Lassen Volcanic National Park you'll find flocks of Canadian geese and chance glimpses of bald eagles wintering at Eagle Lake. Little Shasta River, in the Shasta Valley Wildlife Area five miles east of Yreka, attracts wading birds, river otters, mule deer and high-pitched tundra swans. Trinity Lake is a perfect habitat for brook trout and spawning salmon.

LOCALS RECOMMEND

PRE-HISTORIC FINDS

☞ Page Museum, LA: *California's richest collection of Ice Age fossils.*

☞ La Brea Tar Pits, by Page Museum: *life-size models of mastodons and sabre-tooth tigers.*

☞ Petroglyph Loop, Anza-Borrego: *intriguing scratched designs dating back thousands of years.*

☞ China Lake Petroglyphs, Ridgecrest: *thousands of ancient Indian petroglyphs, weekend tours by Maturango Museum.*

6 EVENTS & FESTIVALS

WHALE WATCHING

San Diego — January

NAPA VALLEY MUSTARD CELEBRATION

Calistoga — February 7-11

WINTERFEST

Chester — February 16-18

FESTIVAL OF WHALES

Dana Point — March

BLOSSOM TRAIL

Fresno — February-March

SNOWFEST

Tahoe City — March 1-10

RANUNCULUS FLOWER FIELD SEASON

Carlsbad — March-April

CELTIC FAIRE

Sonora — March 8-10

DAFFODIL FESTIVAL

Fortuna — March 16-17

MCDA OSTRICH FEST

Merced — March 30

PETROGLYPHS CANYON TOURS

Ridgecrest — March

PEG LEG LIAR'S CONTEST

Borrego Springs — April 6

SHEEP SHEARING

Petaluma — April 13

WHOLE EARTH FESTIVAL

Davis — May

FESTIVAL OF WEEDS AND WILDFLOWERS

Weed — July 19-20

GRAVENSTEIN APPLE FAIRE

Sebastopol — August 10-11

PETALUMA RIVER FESTIVAL

Petaluma — August 17

SONOMA COUNTY HARVEST FESTIVAL

Santa Rosa — October 4-6

THERE'S MORE!

For a complete list of events and festivals throughout California, visit our internet site at <http://gocalif.ca.gov>

